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ENGLISH

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THREE THOUSAND
ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-NINTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 2 March 1993, at 4 p.m.

President:	Mr. O'BRIEN	(New Zealand)
Members:	Brazil	Mr. SARDENBERG
	Cape Verde	Mr. JESUS
	China	Mr. CHEN Jian
	Djibouti	Mr. OLHAYE
	France	Mr. MERIMEE
	Hungary	Mr. ERDOS
	Japan	Mr. HATANO
	Morocco	Mr. SNOUSSI
	Pakistan	Mr. MARKER
	Russian Federation	Mr. VORONTSOV
	Spain	Mr. YAÑEZ-BARNUEVO
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir David HANNAY
	United States of America	Ms. ALBRIGHT
	Venezuela	Mr. ARRIA

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The meeting was called to order at 4.30 p.m.

EXPRESSION OF THANKS TO THE RETIRING PRESIDENT

The PRESIDENT: As this is the first meeting of the Security Council for the month of March, I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of all the members of the Council, to my predecessor, His Excellency Ambassador Ahmed Sounni, Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations, for the services he rendered to the Council as its President during February. I am sure I speak for all members of the Security Council in expressing deep appreciation to him for all his work and for the great diplomatic skill, unfailing courtesy and good humour that he was able to bring to the conduct of the Council's business last month. We thank him very much.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

THE SITUATION CONCERNING WESTERN SAHARA

REPORT BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (S/25170)

The PRESIDENT: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on the agenda.

The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the situation concerning Western Sahara, which is contained in document S/25170.

Members of the Council also have before them document S/25340, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

(The President)

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now. There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour: Brazil, Cape Verde, China, Djibouti, France, Hungary, Japan, Morocco, New Zealand, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Venezuela

The PRESIDENT: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has therefore been adopted unanimously as resolution 809 (1993).

I shall now call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. VORONTSOV (Russian Federation) (interpretation from Russian): The Russian delegation is pleased to see you Sir, as President of the Council for this month. We extend to you our full support in your complex work.

We are also grateful, Sir, to your predecessor, Ambassador Ahmed Snoussi, for his outstanding work in guiding the Council's business last month.

The Russian Federation has continually supported the efforts of the United Nations to provide for a just solution to the problem of Western Sahara, on the basis of respect for the rights of the people of Western Sahara, including the right to self-determination. The Russian delegation is in favour of the speedy holding of the referendum, under the aegis of the United Nations, and opposes delays in holding it, since this would not be in keeping with the interests of the peoples of the region and of the world

(Mr. Vorontsov, Russian Federation)

community as a whole, and would create uncertainty about the issue of the continued presence in Western Sahara of United Nations personnel.

In our view, there is a need to take measures that will lead to mutually acceptable solutions and move forward the settlement process, which has become bogged down, and to do so on the basis of appropriate decisions of the Security Council.

We believe that the resolution we have just adopted, a reaffirmation of the Council's previous resolutions, means among other things, a reaffirmation of their provisions about support for the Secretary-General's efforts to organize, with monitoring by the United Nations, a referendum on self-determination for the people of Western Sahara, in cooperation with the Organization of African Unity.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Russian Federation for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. ARRIA (Venezuela) (interpretation from Spanish): My delegation is particularly pleased to see you, Sir, presiding over the Council's meetings this month. We reiterate our complete readiness to assist you in every way possible.

We are also particularly pleased to express our appreciation of the very coridial and very able guidance of the Security Council last month by Ambassador Ahmed Snoussi of Morocco.

My country attaches the utmost importance to the process of self-determination in Western Sahara. This stems from our systematic support for the process of decolonization, in whose framework this item belongs and which constitutes one of the most commendable achievements of the United Nations.

(Mr. Arria, Venezuela)

Venezuela has followed closely the efforts of the United Nations to implement the Settlement Plan agreed by the parties. We have supported the good offices mission entrusted to the Secretary-General, and we are participating actively in the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO).

Venezuela shares the international community's concern, reiterated in the resolution we have just adopted, over the delays and difficulties experienced so far in completing the process successfully. The successive reports of the Secretary-General have identified the existing problems and the initiatives he and his Special Representative have taken to resolve them. We particularly congratulate the Secretary-General on the discharge of his responsibilities, and we hope that he will continue his efforts to achieve agreed solutions that are mutually satisfactory to the parties on all of those matters that still require his good offices.

In deciding to vote in favour of the draft resolution, the Government of Venezuela attached the greatest importance to the fact that it reflects a meeting of minds of the members of the Council on how to proceed quickly - this year, if possible - to hold a referendum for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara. We wish to emphasize our understanding that any agreement making that possible should be based on continuing consultations with the parties and therefore on their agreement. That is a basic principle that should govern the solution of any international dispute submitted to the United Nations.

(Mr. Arria, Venezuela)

In this context, Venezuela hopes for a just and equitable soluton to all the outstanding matters, through an exercise of transparent good offices, guaranteeing the parties and the international community that the referendum will be objective in all its aspects, that its results will serve as a solid and permanent basis for peace in the region and that, to that end, it will give free expression to the will of the population of Western Sahara.

(Mr. Arria, Venezuela)

The Government of Venezuela, aware of the importance in this context of the period of consultations that is now beginning, completely supports the appeal made to both parties to cooperate fully with the Secretary-General in the implementation of the Settlement Plan, on the understanding that this is the only available and agreed basis that can serve as a framework for this exercise. If difficulties persist, Venezuela would not rule out the possibility of other mediation mechanisms being explored. In particular, Venezuela would be prepared to participate, if the Secretary-General were to so decide, in a group of friendly countries whose assistance might be deemed useful by the Secretary-General - in consultation with and with the consent of the parties - in helping to overcome any difficulties that might jeopardize the implementation of the Settlement Plan.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Venezuela for the kind words he addressed to me.

There are no further names on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on the agenda.

The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.